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Eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names
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Item 8 of the provisional agenda*
Measures taken and proposed to implement United Nations resolutions on the standardization of geographical names, including the economic and social benefits

Report on the implementation of United Nations resolutions by New Zealand

Summary**

The report focuses on 29 resolutions of the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names between 1967 and 2012. They have been chosen because of their relevance to the work of the national naming authority of New Zealand, the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa.

Geographic names play a significant role in the historical, cultural, economic, administrative and linguistic matters of New Zealand. The two fundamental roles of the Board under the New Zealand Geographic Board (Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa) Act 2008, are location identification and preservation of culture and heritage, which have both direct and indirect economic and social benefits for all New Zealanders.

The Government of New Zealand wants reliable names and locations of geographic features; therefore it recognizes geographic names as a fundamental theme of the spatial data infrastructure of the country. Unique and usable geographic names are key to locating people and property, contribute to efficient government administration and link data for a wide range of public and private purposes. Geographic names identify where we are as people go about their everyday business, are a component of infrastructure and, most importantly, matter in emergency responses. Geographic names also add to a sense of identity and belonging — helping to better connect people with their identity: who they are, where they are from and the importance of those who came before them. Many of the geographic names in New Zealand describe the physical aspects of features and provide information about the natural and cultural conditions at the time they were coined. The resources found in those places may be useful for survival or economic gain.

* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report was prepared by Jill Remnant, Advisor, New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa, and is available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the language of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/36/CRP.36.

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Implementation of the relevant recommendations of the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names has been ongoing throughout the long history of the Board, which began formally in 1946 as a successor to the Honorary Geographic Board of New Zealand, which was established in 1924. The naming role of the Board has been developed and refined over the years to reflect lessons learned, changing attitudes and to uphold best practice naming principles. The Board follows best practices that have been established as a result of the recommendations set out in the resolutions of the Conference and that are applicable to New Zealand. The Board's decision-making is independent and based on robust processes.

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Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Tenth Conference (for distribution only)

National report of New Zealand

Summary**

The national report of New Zealand is provided according to resolution V/7 of the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names. It builds upon previous national reports submitted by New Zealand for the Ninth and Tenth Conferences, held in 2007 and 2012.

A historical timeline of informal and formal naming influences contained in the report provides a snapshot to illustrate the long-term, structured and deliberate application of toponyms in New Zealand and the extended jurisdiction of the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa. The statutory role, functions and strategic goals of the Board are summarized and a flow diagram is provided to represent, in brief, the process followed for regular geographic name proposals. The core activities listed in the report represent the fundamental work of the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa and its secretariat. Initiatives for the upcoming year will contribute to the strategic goals of the Board. Several challenges, and the corresponding actions taken to resolve them, are highlighted in the report. In particular, changes to three geographic names that had offensive connotations.

* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report was prepared by Wendy Shaw, Secretary, New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa. The report is available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the language of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/37/CRP.37.

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Item 10 of the provisional agenda*
Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity (including indigenous, minority and regional language names)

Cultural aspects of Māori geographic naming in New Zealand

Summary**

New Zealand geographic names indicate the cultural diversity of people past and present. They reflect the history of New Zealand and the different people who have lived there. Of these people, tangata whenua[1] Māori lived there for many centuries prior to European settlement and are responsible for many of the geographic names in New Zealand.

Geographic names are integral to the symbols representing what is on the ground. They give context to space, help us to navigate from one place to another, enable informative communication, link the stories behind them, provide identity and assert rights. Deeper still, they can revive or add to our knowledge of the heritage and events that occurred at a place. They are our foundation, our place in the world, our home. They give meaning, whether metaphorical, descriptive, themed, economic, personal or commemorative. The physical representation of "real world" geographic names on maps and charts is important as a fundamental cultural theme. Capturing all of these qualities in a single geographic name can be a challenge. A further challenge for New Zealand is that it has more than one official language.

Māori and English are official languages in New Zealand. Māori geographic names have been established since the time of the first migrations, between A.D. 800 and 950. Layers of history, settlement, conquest, integration and seasonal

* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report was prepared by Mark Dyer, Surveyor-General and Chairperson of the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa, and Wendy Shaw, Secretary for the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa, and will be available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the language of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/38/CRP.38.

[1] Tangata whenua refers to people who belong to or are from a particular place.

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migration would sometimes introduce multiple Māori names for features and places. This has posed challenges for what to show on modern maps, charts and other official documents, namely, whether to use the most commonly used toponym (Māori or non-Māori) or to restore an original Māori name. The desire to acknowledge, promote and encourage the use of existing Māori geographic names has been important since early exploration and is etched in our present-day geographic naming legislation. It is important to discover past names no longer in use as a way to recall history, heritage and cultural identity. For Māori geographic names the New Zealand Geographic Board has some specific statutory functions to provide for appropriate recognition to be given to the cultural and heritage values associated with geographic features:

(a) To collect them;

(b) To encourage their use on official maps and charts;

(c) To make sure that standardized orthography is applied;

(d) To ensure that Board membership has Māori representation.

The rules for geographic naming in New Zealand have evolved and developed over many years, with a strong emphasis on preserving and restoring original Māori names. Oral traditions and history remain strong in Māori culture today, with connections to the land and its names being hugely important to unlock past stories, events and mythologies, helping to preserve the creation traditions and providing a sense of belonging and identity. The written records introduced by early Europeans sometimes omitted Māori geographic names, but those names have remained known through oral traditions and continue to be used by Māori today. Since the 1970s there has been a steady move towards greater recognition of the significance of Māori geographic names in the history and culture of New Zealand. Milestones include the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975 and the Māori Language Act 1987 (revised in 2016). These led to a resurgence of interest in Māori geographic names, particularly through Treaty of Waitangi[2] settlements, which have included the restoration of original Māori geographic names as part of cultural redress.

[2] The agreement signed by representatives of the British Crown and leaders of most Māori tribes when New Zealand was first claimed as a colony in 1840 by the British.

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Toponymic data files and gazetteers: data management and interoperability; and data services, applications and products (for example, gazetteers and web services)

Status report on GeoLocator service developments under European location services

Summary**

EuroGeographics continues to develop means of serving European users with geographical names and other spatial data derived from national mapping and cadastral authorities from a single access point. The work started by the EuroGeoNames service has been significantly improved through the design of the GeoLocator service under the European Location Framework project and has continued with the further aim of enabling the operation of European location services by 2018. The GeoLocator service is a gazetteer type of web service, made available to the public for testing and evaluation. It currently contains information on the geographical names, addresses and administrative unit data of 24 European countries. Members of the EuroGeographics association continue to develop and improve the GeoLocator service, which accommodates national INSPIRE-compliant services, and are thereby meeting growing demands of users.

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* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report, which was prepared by Dr. Saulius Urbanas, Service Development Consultant, EuroGeographics; and Pekka Latvala, Research Scientist, Finnish Geospatial Research Institute (FGI)/National Land Survey of Finland, will be made available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the language of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/39/CRP.39.

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Toponymic data files and gazetteers: data management and interoperability; and data services, applications and products (for example, gazetteers and web services)

Maintaining and publishing the geographical names database (GN-DE) within the German Spatial Data Infrastructure (GDI-DE)

Summary**

In Germany, all geographical names-related information on several (topographic) vector data products based on a scale level of 1:250,000 and smaller is maintained in a single database entitled "Geographical names of Germany (GN-DE)". Through unique identifiers, the names entered in the database are linked unambiguously to all databases and products provided by the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy (BKG). At present, the database contains about 160,000 entries, including more than 1,300 names in the minority languages Sorbian (Upper and Lower), Frisian and Danish. The administrative and maintenance tasks for the database are carried out in Frankfurt am Main, while the (Gazetteer) web service is facilitated through the National Geodata Centre at the Federal Agency in Leipzig (see www.geodatenzentrum.de).

The GN-DE data set is currently used for provision of geographical names data within the German Spatial Data Infrastructure (GDI-DE). In 2015, the geographical names data and the Implementing Rules on Interoperability of Spatial Data Sets and Services (that is, data specification by geographical names (annex I)) of the European geospatial data infrastructure (keyword: INSPIRE) were brought into conformity. According to the INSPIRE schedule, countries members of the European Union will be required to realize this only by the year 2017.

The geographical names data set of BKG (conforming to INSPIRE) is already available through the European data portal (http://www.europeandataportal.eu/de/). That portal collects metadata from public sector information which is available in European countries.

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* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report, which was prepared by Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu, Jörgen Spradau and Sandra Niering (all Germany), Dutch- and German-speaking Division (DGSD), is available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the language of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/40/CRP.40.

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Item 6 of the provisional agenda*
Reports on the work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, its divisions, working groups and task teams since the Tenth Conference

Report of the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers 2012-2017

Summary**

The report provides a summary of the activities of the Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names during the 2012-2017 period.

According to the report, three new tasks/issues were proposed and added to the scope of work and to the workplan of the Working Group at the Tenth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names. The Working Group agreed on the methods to be used to set up the online discussion forum on the website. In that regard, three separate forum pages for specific topics have been created and initial documents uploaded to the site.

According to the agreed actions for the 2016-2017 period, the Working Group has, among other things, assisted the Bureau of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names in cooperating with the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management to emphasize, promote and support the tasks and activities of the Group of Experts.

The Working Group has monitored activities and deliverables of the International Organization for Standardization Technical Committee 211, the Open Geospatial Consortium and the Unicode Consortium.

The Working Group has continued to provide consultancy and technical advice concerning the content and structure for data files and gazetteers, among others, through toponymic training courses in Madagascar (2013), Algeria (2014) and Brazil (2017).

* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report was prepared by Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu (Germany), Convenor, Working Group on Toponymic Data Files and Gazetteers, and is available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the language of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/42/CRP.42.

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Besides the maintenance of the online discussion forum, several Working Group members have contributed articles about national efforts for databases and gazetteers to bulletins of the Group of Experts and participated in national and international events related to Working Group issues.

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Eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names
New York, 8-17 August 2017
Item 9(e) of the provisional agenda*
National standardization: toponymic guidelines for map editors and other editors

Toponymic guidelines of the Federal Republic of Germany: sixth revised edition

Summary**

Toponymic guidelines of the Federal Republic of Germany and of the former German Democratic Republic were separately presented for the first time at the ninth session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, held in New York in 1981. Subsequent editions were published in 1992, 1998, 2002 and 2010. The sixth edition, published in 2016, will be presented at the eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, to be held in New York in 2017.

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* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report was prepared by Jörn Sievers of the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names of Germany, and is available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the language of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/43/CRP.43.

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Item 10 of the provisional agenda*
Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity (including indigenous, minority and regional language names)

National minority languages and regional languages in Germany

Summary**

The official language in all parts of Germany is standard German. The languages of four national minorities that reside in Germany — the Danes, the Frisians, the Sorbs and the German Sinti and Roma — are officially recognized as minority languages.

Low German has the status of a regional language, which ensures the protection of that language in accordance with the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

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* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report was prepared by Jörn Sievers, Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen (StAGN). The report is available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the language of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/44/CRP.44.E/CONF.105/1.

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Item 11 of the provisional agenda*
Exonyms

Selected German-language exonyms

Summary**

In the report, the author indicates that the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, representing the German-speaking countries, is preparing an updated and extended list of exonyms as an online version, hosted by the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy.

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* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report was prepared by Roman Stani-Fertl, Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, and is available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the language of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/45/CRP.45.

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Item 12 (c) of the provisional agenda*
Toponymic data files and gazetteers: data services, applications and products (for example, gazetteers and web services)

Provision of a web map service for names and boundaries of physiogeographic regions of Germany compliant with International Organization for Standardization and Open Geospatial Consortium standards

Summary**

The map described in the report, delimiting areas of physiogeographic regions, has been available in print since 1979. The dictionary of geographical regions by Herbert Liedtke has been available since 1984.

The German spatial data infrastructure has been under development since 2003, while the Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community has been under development since 2007.

Those initiatives aim to create a technical infrastructure compliant with a service-oriented architecture, which means that spatial data are made available by means of standardized Internet services.

The new web map service for physiogeographic regions has been available since May 2017 from www.geoportal.de. The service migrates the print products into the digital world of the Internet and into the spatial data infrastructure.

The main added value of this service is the combined provision of the map with the dictionary. A description of each region can be retrieved with one click on the map.

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* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report was prepared by Jürgen Walther (Germany), Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy. The report is available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the language of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/46/CRP.46.

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Toponymic data files and gazetteers: data services, applications and products (for example, gazetteers and web services)

Geographical names in German coastal waters

Summary**

The Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen (StAGN)), in cooperation with the German Land Survey Offices of the northern German Federal States, has published a revised and updated edition (second edition 2017) of four map sheets covering geographical names in German coastal waters. Approximately 1,500 names which are common in the German coastal waters of the North and Baltic Seas are listed.

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* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report, which was prepared by Dieter Grothenn (Germany), Ständiger Ausschuss für geographische Namen (StAGN) (Permanent Committee on Geographical Names), is available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the language of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/47/CRP.47.

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Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Tenth Conference (for distribution only)

Report of Germany

Summary**

The Permanent Committee on Geographical Names is the body responsible for developing recommendations on the standardization of geographical names.

The sixth edition of the toponymic guidelines of Germany was published in 2016 and is available online.[1]

The languages of four national minorities residing in Germany — the Danes, the Frisians, the Sorbs and the German Sinti and Roma — are officially recognized as minority languages. Low German has the status of a regional language, thus giving it protection under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Geographical names in Frisian and Upper and Lower Sorbian are in use.

In 2002, the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names published the second edition of its list of selected German-language exonyms. It is now preparing an updated list, to be made available online by the Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy.

The German data set provided for the Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe project is a single database entitled "Geographical names of Germany". It is currently used for geographical names within the German spatial data infrastructure.

A new web map service showing the physiogeographic regions of Germany has been available online since May 2017.[2]

* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report was prepared by Bernd Edwin Beinstein and Pier-Giorgio Zaccheddu, Federal Agency for Cartography and Geodesy. The report is available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the language of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/48/CRP.48.

[1] See www.stagn.de/empfehlung-schreibweise-gn.

[2] See www.geoportal.de.

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In cooperation with the relevant surveying offices, the northern federal states revised and updated four maps covering German coastal waters, which were published in 2017. Some 1,500 names common to the coastal waters of the North and Baltic seas are shown.

An updated list of country names in German (the thirteenth such edition) was published by the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names in January 2014.[3]

[3] Available from www.stagn.de/liste-staatennamen.

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Reports on the work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, its divisions, working groups and task teams since the Tenth Conference

Report of the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names on its activities from 2012 to 2017

Summary**

In the period from 2012 to 2017, the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names included experts from the following 11 countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. In addition, experts from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland participated in the events of the division as observers.

The report of the division covers its regional meetings, held in 2012 in Baku, in 2013 in Yalta (Ukraine), in 2015 in Yerevan and in 2016 in Chisinau, at which participants exchanged information on issues related to national and international standardization of geographical names.

The substantial progress in the national standardization of geographical names achieved by division member countries is acknowledged in the report.

In the report, the successful collaboration among the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia division, the Baltic division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names and the Working Group on Geographical Names of the Interstate Council on Geodesy, Cartography, Cadastre and Earth Remote Sensing of the Commonwealth of Independent States was underlined.

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* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report was prepared and submitted by the Chair of the Eastern Europe, Northern and Central Asia division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, V. M. Boginsky (Russian Federation), and is available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the languages of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/50/CRP.50.

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Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Tenth Conference (for distribution only)

Report of the Russian Federation

Summary**

The report covers certain trends in the national standardization of geographical names in the period 2012-2017, including the current status of the legislative and normative framework for the identification, standardization, use, registration and recording of geographical names as a part of the historical and cultural heritage of the peoples of the Russian Federation, as well as the current status of the development of the national database of geographical names, the State catalogue of geographical names, the harmonization of dictionaries and reference material and the manufacturing of the basic cartographic products.

The report provides information on the use of the GOST83 Romanization system approved by the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names for maps and atlases published for international circulation.

International meetings relating to geographical names that were attended by Russian experts in the period 2012-2017 are listed in the report.

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* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report was prepared by the Russian Federal Service of State Registration, Cadastre and Cartography. The report is available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the languages of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/51/CRP.51.

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Reports on the work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, its divisions, working groups and task teams since the Tenth Conference

Report of the French-speaking Division

Summary**

The activities undertaken by the French-speaking Division since the Tenth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names have been based mainly on the decisions taken at the Division's meeting of 30 April 2014 in New York.

On the basis of those decisions, the new Bureau prepared a programme of work that followed on from the previous mandate and ensured the effective functioning of the Division, enabling it to:

- Share national activity reports by preparing an inventory of national bodies and national toponymic authorities using a revised country data sheet;
- Offer a distance-learning toponymy course on the website of the School of Geographical Sciences of France;
- Keep up to date a website on toponymy in French and make available to users tools such as a toponymy course in French and a database of world place names in French;
- Publish issues 8, 9 and 10 of the toponymic newsletter, the *Bulletin d'information toponymique*, as well as issues 6 and 7 in 2012 and 2013, respectively;
- Participate in the work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names.

In addition to the regular communication between its members, principally by email, the Division has met twice since the Tenth Conference, on the sidelines of the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth sessions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, which were held in New York (2014) and Bangkok (2016), respectively.

* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full text, prepared by Élisabeth Calvarin, Chair of the French-speaking Division, is available in the language of submission only from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html (document E/CONF.105/52/CRP.52).

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